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(*b*) if so, how many nurses were given casual leave and privilege leave in 1952–53?

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" (*a*) Yes, Sir.

" (*b*) Casual leave was granted to 105 nurses and privilege leave was granted to 50 nurses."

SRI K. P. GOPALAN :—" Sir, in the General Hospital at Madras there are about 500 nurses. From the answer of the Hon. Minister it is clear that so many of the nurses have not been given either privilege leave or casual leave to which they are entitled. May I know from the Hon. Minister whether it is a fact that several applications from these nurses for casual and privilege leave, to which they are entitled, were refused by the Matron and the Hospital authorities?"

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" Sir, I do not know from where the hon. Member got his figures that there are 500 nurses in the General Hospital. It is not more correct than the figure quoted by another hon. Member the other day about the birth-rate in Malabar. These are quite unauthorized statements. Not only privilege leave, but casual leave, and maternity leave was granted to nurses."

Polling arrangements during the Malabar District Board elections.

* 248 *Q.*—SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP : Will the Hon. the Minister for Local Administration be pleased to state—

(*a*) how many polling stations were arranged in Malabar during the recent district board elections and how do they compare with those for the last general elections;

(*b*) whether there were separate booths for men and women; and

(*c*) if so, how many were provided for women in the Malabar District Board elections?

THE HON. SRI S. S. RAMASAMY PADAYACHI :—" (*a*) The number of polling stations opened in the Malabar district for the last district board elections was 829, compared with 1,022 polling stations opened during the last general elections to the State Legislative Assembly and the Lok Sabha.

" (*b*) & (*c*) No separate booths were provided for women, but separate voting compartments were opened for them in booths, wherever necessary."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" Sir, in one firka for about 22 villages with 64,000 voters there were only seven polling stations and each station which was accommodated in an elementary school had about 8 to 11 booths with all the overcrowding and confusion. Will the Government see to it that in villages having at least a thousand voters a polling station is established and that no polling station generally has more than two booths?"

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THE HON. SRI S. S. RAMASAMY PADAYACHI :—" Yes, Sir, Government will consider the suggestion of the hon. Member for future elections."

SRI K. MADHAVAN NAMBIAR :—" Are the Government aware of the fact that polling stations were not arranged in all the villages in Malabar as was done during the general elections."

MR. SPEAKER :—" The Hon. Minister has already answered the question."

SRI P. K. GOPALAKRISHNAN :—" Sir, Fort Cochin which had nine polling stations last time had only one this time and Fort Cochin is scattered over an area of about 40 square miles. Will the Government be pleased to see that at least for every two miles distance, a polling station is established hereafter? "

THE HON. SRI S. S. RAMASAMY PADAYACHI :—" Yes, Sir, for the next elections, the suggestion of the hon. Member will be considered."

SRI C. H. KANARAN :—" Sir, the reduction in the number of polling stations resulted in thousands of voters not being able to go to the polling stations and exercise their franchise. Is there any special reason why the Government reduced the number of polling stations? "

THE HON. SRI S. S. RAMASAMY PADAYACHI :—" There were no special reasons to reduce the polling stations. Polling stations were opened according to the instructions of the Election Officer. The suggestion of the hon. Member will be considered when conducting the elections in future and polling stations opened to suit the conveniences of voters."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" Sir, what were the reasons that weighed with the Government and compelled them to reduce the number of polling stations opened during the general elections in Malabar alone while the same number of polling stations as were opened during the general elections were opened in the other districts? Only in Malabar the number was reduced. What was the reason that compelled them to do this? Did they apprehend that the Communists will come at the head of the District Board? "

THE HON. SRI S. S. RAMASAMY PADAYACHI :—" There was no such motive behind the mind of the Government, Sir."

Payment of increments, allowed to elementary school teachers, to Pre-Vocational Instructors.

* 249 *Q.*—DR. K. B. MENON : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government have recently received any representation from the Pre-Vocational Instructors' Association